

**TT No.76:** *Keith Aslan* - Saturday January 6<sup>th</sup> 2018; **BRAMFORD ROAD OLD BOYS** v Bramford United; Bob Coleman Cup; Kick-Off: 13.36; Result: 0-6; Admission & Programme: Free; Attendance: 22 (12 home, 5 away & 5 neutral).

Cup weekend again and it's the Bob Coleman variety cutting the mustard (Coleman-mustard, get it) with the Bramford derby just too good to miss, although the attendance would suggest it passed many of the locals by. The home side strut their stuff in Division 2 of the Suffolk and Ipswich League while their opponents play in the rarefied atmosphere of the Premier Division. Could there be a giant killing? No. Old Boys play adjacent to the Whitton Fitness Centre, about 4 miles to the north of Ipswich with a 15-minute bus service connecting the City Centre to the ground. It has all the spectator facilities you would expect at this level, nothing. But a raised concrete 'terrace' along the half way line with a fence to lean on provided an excellent view of proceedings. The Sports Centre next door is a warm place to thaw out and three vending machines supplying everything you could wish for in the drink and snack department with my 'smooth café latte' going down a treat at half time. Also, the Ipswich Eagles Cycle Speedway track backs on to the ground. A new sport to me but apparently quite big round these parts. The track had terracing, seats and floodlights, all in all very impressive.

To mark the occasion Old Boys produced a one off programme, nothing fancy but it hit the spot for me. As the score would suggest the home side never managed to close the gap in class with United's victory never in doubt. Hats off to the under employed away keeper, a chubby chap who carried off his vomit inducing violet kit surprisingly well. To him the question 'Who ate all the pies?' would be a rhetorical one. The game was enlivened during the first half when a spectator crept up behind the linesman and pulled his shorts down, a first for me. Who says the fun's gone out of football? How we all laughed, the shorts shifter turned out to be his brother (well that was his story). If that's what siblings do to each other I'm glad I'm an only child.

All records must come to an end and after three Saturdays on the spin of punctual kick off's we reverted back to late starts today. Can't really blame the ref. He was on the pitch with his two linesmen ready to go at 1.25 but neither side felt able to leave the warmth of the changing rooms without his exhortations. Old Boys eventually wandered on to the pitch but United remained firmly in situ, loud music blaring from within, presumably they were waiting for the heavy metal track to finish before venturing out into the cold. It was left to a fellow hopper, who presumably aspired to get home the same day, to go around to the changing rooms and motivate them to come out and play a game of football. Don't forget to put it in your report ref.

